RUMI
Unveil the Sun

A play
by Amrit Kent

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For my husband Patty

Mohini & Noon

Keku, Harish & Arjun

Ranjit & Rohini

Acknowledgements

It was three years ago that my daughter Mohini Kent Noon introduced me to the world of the mystic poet Rumi and urged me to write this play. Thus began my invigorating search for information about Rumi and his life. My research was greatly assisted by Dr. Naseem Akhtar, a great scholar and curator of the National Museum. Dr. Akhtar spent a great deal of time interpreting Rumi's Persian verses for me and also gave me access to a vast repertoire of related literature for my play. A very special thanks to him.

As my play progressed, my interaction with scholars and other kindred spirits led to the formation of Red Rose Society. Our logo is a single red rose, symbolizing the Love that is at the heart of Sufism. Love of God.

The Red Rose Society is supported and encouraged by several eminent individuals such as Khushwant Singh and Padma Bhushan Dr. Abid Hussain. Other key members, well wishers and patrons are Padma Bhushan

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AMRIT KENT

Foreward

Like all works of art, *Unveil the Sun* is a work of imagination. We cannot be certain about the details of the life of Rumi and indeed, we know even less about his mentor and guide, Shams-e-din of Tabriz. However, we know the basic outlines of the story of Rumi and Shams, an astonishing relationship between two men, which surpasses the realm of friendship or that of teacher and disciple whilst containing both elements. Amrit Kent's play focuses on the lyrical, intense and emotionally bruising encounter between the two men which, it appears, finally claimed the life of the older, Shams, and turned the life of the younger, Rumi, upside down.

Shams we are told in the narratives that have come down to us from various biographies and hagiographies of Rumi, was in search of Rumi. He was in search of a man who was worthy to receive the esoteric or inner knowledge that he, Shams, was bound to pass on before he left this life. Shams was a wandering dervish, a mystic

who did not belong to any particular brotherhood or *tariqa*, he was not someone who was capable of joining a group although he did have a spiritual teacher or master. The Islamic mystical path, as with the mystical life of other great religious traditions, required a teacher or *pir*, someone who is able to guide the adept on the right way towards the Light. This process of spiritual purification is not open to all, that is probably why the pearls of knowledge it contains are hidden and are not available through a casual encounter. As Rumi's illustrious predecessor, Attar, illustrates in his marvellous *Mantiq-ut Tair*, the Conference of the Birds, to know, first you must *want* to know with all your heart and mind, you must yearn for this knowledge of the heart and mind, then you must choose to enter the way or path towards the Greater, knowing that the odds are against you ever reaching your goal. But the very decision to make the journey is already an immense step, it is a renaissance of spirit of the person who makes this choice.

Unveil the Sun makes an important point in that it shows that this yearning can be buried in a person who may not be entirely aware of it; it lies dormant in the individual like a seed which needs someone with greater spiritual knowledge to tend to it and to make it flower. This is not simply intellectual or book knowledge, it is not the 'smell of books' as one of the characters in the play confesses he loves, it is a deep psychic realization of one's own potential, it has something to do with the subliminal, the

unconscious, the aleatory, something Muslims call "*barakah*" or grace beyond our control or reckoning. The play depicts Rumi as a successful religious scholar, who had intellectual knowledge of the spiritual path which he inherited from his father Baha-al din; eventually he inherited his father's renowned *madrassa*, he had numerous followers who flocked from far and wide to sit at his feet. He was respected by rulers and by simple people who learnt from him. However, Rumi was not at peace with himself, he was dulled, mottled by a feeling of dissatisfaction, which nagged at him like an ache in an amputated limb; his success and standing in society brought him no satisfaction. He had an intuition that there was more to the religious life than learning, correct conduct, ethical behaviour and sober prayer, the orthopraxis of the faithful who stick to the necessary but insufficient outer knowledge of religious observance.

Rumi's encounter with Shams was like a bolt of lightning, he was struck down by Shams' presence, there was a catalytic conflagration between the two men, he was hypnotized by Shams — the play describes it as "A current appears to pass through them" — to such an extent that he disregarded his beloved family, he left behind his revered father's teachings which he knew only with the surface of his mind, he relinquished his previous high status as teacher and leader of men, he shed "the lust of possession (that) blinds the heart. The lust of rank and place (that) keeps you apart!", he began to act as

if he were insane; and in a sense he had become insane or *majnoun*, drunk with the sudden discovery of his true purpose that swept him away like a powerful ocean current. Under Shams' guidance, Rumi broke free from imitative, unoriginal modes of thought and began to *realize* the aesthetic of the spiritual life as a function of being, the beautiful and awesome inner world of eidetic vision containing both the intoxication of ecstatic experience and the disinterested contemplation of beauty as an analogue of the Divine. This is not an easy achievement in a cruel world out of joint in which beauty appears to be a luxury and ecstasy a template for escapism.

This powerful encounter, as the play indicates, was consolidated by a private *conversation,* which took place over a long period in which everyone else, including Rumi's beloved son, Sultan Walad, was excluded. I italicize the word, conversation, because clearly what passed between the two men was more than simple words, the knowledge that Shams imparted, or generated in Rumi, was beyond words; it was a sort of psychological, kinetic energy that broke the mould of Rumi's respectable persona; he was a chrysalis about to burst from its skin and be transformed into a butterfly, a creature of beauty and flight. Transformation, *metanoia*, is not simple or easy. As Amrit Kent's play dramatically shows, it is painful, it involves dying, the breaking of ties, breaking free from conventional knowledge — Shams exhorts Rumi to "Stop

reading (his) father's writings (and) to find your own words" — this crucial and hidden teaching of Shams brought about the disappearance of the old and appearance of the new in Rumi.

The metamorphosis that Rumi undergoes is infused with a tension between the Apollonian and Dionysian impulses, which run through all of life; between light and darkness, between beauty, constriction of form and individual identity, and the deep and disturbing spiritual experience acquired through loss of individual identity in religious ecstasy. Both are valuable and both give rise to flashing insight and fertile blindness — for Rumi it was a withdrawal from the mundane, quotidian life into mythical experience, the return from the multiplicity of the suffering world to the Unique, the Truth or *al-Haq*, to the Wholeness from which the cosmos emanates. In short, it is the search for God. The mythical in Rumi's cosmogony is a multivalent notion, which suggests — to those who are open to its shadows and allusions, to its primordial echoes — the divine origin of primal experience, the intuitive knowledge of the soul, the ecstatic experience that engulfed Rumi. His uneasiness prior to his meeting with Shams was akin to the reed flute torn from the riverbed whose plaintive song remembers its origin or home. In a sense, we are all torn from the womb of being into becoming and suffering, we all have, no matter how truncated, a memory of our origins, a wounded simulacrum of a memory of the divine spark, what the

great Greek sage, Socrates, called the *daemon*, within us. When we discover this *daemon* and let it speak to us, everything we hold dear, or think we hold dear, melts and we become strangers to the world as we begin to know who we really are, and start to travel on the journey from dissonance to harmony.

The key message that Shams passed on to Rumi and Rumi was to later pass on to future generations through his astonishing poetry and his oceanic, didactic work — the *Mathnawi* — which the writer and Arabist, Robert Irwin has described as a "great sprawling series of stories within stories" in which "the inner stories ... indicate the mystical meanings of the outer stories", the key message is that the journey is perilous and it demands all our commitment. From this perspective the mission is impossible since the true essence of the search is beyond our senses, and the destination is mercurial and endless; in short Shams broke the mould of commonsense and respectability that had held Rumi. From his newly naked and vulnerable state, he embarked on the search for the miraculous, for the "love that burns like a sword emerging from the furnace; love that is vertigo of heaven; love that cannot be caged by words", this is what Shams taught Rumi. He was not concerned with ritual and the Law, which are essential in orthodox Islamic practice. In fact Shams joined the sacred with the sacrilegious, he mirrored the just in the unjust, he excelled in deplorable manners in his zeal to refute religious piety and practice.

For Shams the kernel of the spiritual life has an extremely modern flavour to it. He wrote in his Discourse, the *Maqalamat*, that our preoccupation should be to discover the answers to the questions: "Who am I, what is my essence? And to what end have I come here and where am I headed and what are my roots and what am I doing this very hour and what is my focus?" A character in the play observes that the love that Shams espouses is unfettered by religious decorum and law. It disregards dogma, passes no judgement, it is not 'political' yet paradoxically it remains "A dangerous brand"; it is dangerous not only to the participants who can fall into the pit of unthinking, unreflective and potentially destructive subjectivity, but also to the authority of the state — it reeks of anarchy.

Rumi tells us in his poetry that we are surrounded by the signs of God, which point towards the Greater, but they are signs and not ends in themselves, they are simulacra and not the End in Itself. These phenomena or signs of God — for example, the stars, the moon, and, of course, the sun which is symbolized by Shams' name — are beautiful and one of the ninety-nine names of Allah is *Jamal* or beauty. However, after meeting Shams, Rumi is no longer satisfied with beauty alone, he wants to join in ecstatic union with the Beloved or the Sublime. Beauty is form and limit, it gives us pleasure and a sense of balance and harmony, even of serenity; the Sublime is more tempestuous, it is the Awesomeness of the Divine,

it is the Abyss that creates in us a sense of fear on account of its lack of limits and recognisable form; it is, in this sense, the Dionysian element in the cosmos, the *mysterium tremendum*. We dive from the surface of our life and merge into it. It is the loss of the self. The prophet Muhammad exhorted us to die before we die, the experience that Rumi yearned for was a form of dying.

Shams broke the mould and Rumi lost control, he became a whirling dervish, motionless in constant movement like the great heavenly bodies, which are still, yet are also in perpetual motion. Rumi's poetry was thrown out like sparks from his dancing, which is described as *sama*. Shams wrote about *sama* in glowing terms: "The dancing of men of God is elegant and delicate. It's like a leaf flowing on the water's surface. Inside like a mountain, a whole range of mountains, and outside like straw." The poetry, which tumbled out of Rumi after Shams' disappearance, was the fingerprint of his newly-discovered soul, it is the clue to the ecstatic spiritual experience he invites his followers to *realize* in themselves whilst at the same time exhorting them to keep silent — *khamush* ! Even though he expressed his vision in words, in fact thousands of words, in discourse and poetry, Rumi was aware that as language is incapable of penetrating the mystery of music, so it is ultimately futile in face of the actual experience of the mystic. His poetry exists as a powerful catalyst, as a beautiful reminder, as an invitation,

but not as an end in itself. In a sense we are only spectators — at Amrit Kent's play — and an audience of Rumi's poetry. The real journey begins, if it begins at all, in the silent travail and un-witnessed turmoil of our respective souls. If the play or the poetry acts upon us successfully, we are cancelled and absorbed for the time we watch, listen and read — and we may learn something of Rumi's intense suffering and his lyrical vision, of his overpowering sense of being at one with the Unity, the ground of all Being. For that time the distance, which divides us from the Other, may be eradicated and we are freed into the Greater Whole. We are then filled with a sense of metaphysical consolation. We are resuscitated by Rumi's presence through his art.

Shams' disappearance — although the play indicates that he was murdered by Rumi's son, Sultan Walad, this is not historically certain — almost destroyed Rumi's mind. For a while he was certifiable, he disgraced his family and he lost a lot of disciples and friends. However, this was the superficial consequence of his behaviour. As Rumi says in the play, Shams "touched the very core of my existence." During this time of tribulation, Rumi's wife Gohar Khatun behaves heroically and with true loving concern for her husband. As the character, Chalpi, in the play says, she gave "... us unspoken lessons in love. The sort of love that Shams evoked: unconditional, undemanding, and unstinting. It is she, my master's wife, who is the true image of love". At the end Rumi,

too, is submerged in love. Sprayed with a multitude of images flowing in the torrents of verse, which reflected a Dionysian music and dance rising from a hidden central Unity, his poetry sings of many things, but underlying it all is the need for the lover to find the Beloved in wordless union. *Unveil the Sun* does a creditable job in showing us how beauty and true yearning for the Beloved was created in a maelstrom of anger, deceit, lust for power, loss, terror, possibly murder — a microcosm of the world we live in — through this ordeal Rumi discovers a flow of creative energy, which reaches out from himself to the Greater, the unchanging ground of being, to the *Allahu Akbar* that is buried like a seed in all of us.

RAFICQ ABDULLA

Comment by
Khushwant Singh

Amrit Kent made a niche for herself in the hall of fame as poet, novelist, dramatist and singer. Her abiding passion has been religion and mysticism — a happy blend of different faiths: Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Sikh. Its symbol is the Red Rose. Her latest offering is a play with music *Unveil the Sun* based on the interaction between Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi (13th century) and his mentor Shams Tabrizi. Rumi set up a school of dancing dervishes who dressed in long red fez caps and white ankle length skirts went round and round in circles to the playing of flute and drum in sheer ecstasy of mystic exaltation. Amrit captures the essence of the meaning of the word *fanna* — to destroy ones ego by merging it with the divine.

K SINGH

Contents

Introduction

The play is based on the life of the 13th century Sufi poet, Mevlana Rumi. Legend has it that he was born in 1207 A.D. in Balkh (modern Afghanistan) but the family settled in Konya, Turkey, when he was a child. Cleric, distinguished teacher, a pillar of society and confidant of the Sultan of Konya, Jalaluddin Rumi had led a conventional, respectable life until the fateful day he met the Wild One, Shams Tabrizi. Shams, much older than Rumi, was a dervesh who had wandered long in his quest for the *Mard-i-Khuda* (Man of God). His search ended with Rumi but there remained the task of revealing the Mevlana to himself by awakening his slumbering soul. Birth is a painful process, the final victory demands the ultimate sacrifice and Shams paid the price, with his life. Out of Rumi's great loss and his unbearable pain was born sublime poetry and the *Divan-e-Shams* was his offering to his lost guru. From a sedate man of

conventional religion, Rumi was transformed into a Lover of God, unashamedly dancing and singing in the streets of Konya. His magnum opus *Masnavi*, is also referred to as the Quran in Pehlavi, *Masnavi-i-Manavi*.

Cast

1.	Jalal-ud-din Rumi	
2.	Shams-ud-din Tabrizi	faqir
3.	Gohar Khatun	Rumi's wife
4.	Haisam-ud-din Chalpi	Rumi's disciple
5.	Yusuf	café owner
6.	Sultan Walad	Rumi's son
7.	Salahuddin Zarkob	Rumi's disciple & goldsmith
8.	Risal-ud-din	a courtier
9.	Nusrat-ud-din	vizier
10.	First female Kathak dancer	
11.	Second female Kathak dancer	
12.	Male dancer	

Act I
Scene I

1246 A.D.

Konya, a kingdom in Turkey, boasts of two gems: a magnificent Sultan and his court; and Jalaluddin Rumi, the renowned scholar whose madrassa is a great beacon of learning, drawing students from all over the known world. Now, however, Konya is passing through a difficult time.

There are no reliable contemporary descriptions of Rumi or Shamsuddin but it is thought that Rumi was about 37 or 38 when he met Shams, who was about 60. Both of them would have worn long robes and turbans. The turbans had caps at the centre, with cloth wound round it.

The scene opens at a shop that sells sweet *halwa*, *shorva* (soup) and *naan* bread. It is the depths of a bitter winter. The trees are bare and the ground is covered with snow. Yusuf, the shop's proprietor, is a portly middle-aged man with a deferential manner. He is also the storyteller in the play. He opens the doors of his shop, steps out, shivers and rubs his hands. He spread out his

chattais (floor mats) for customers but appears to be dejected.

A loud cry of anguish is heard off-stage. Yusuf jumps and runs out of his shop.

A man runs onto the stage. He is about 37 years old and his appearance is unkempt, desperate and grief-stricken. His beard is matted, his long hair is uncombed and his dark eyes search wildly hither and thither. He is dressed in a long woolen robe made of Suf. It is Jalaluddin Rumi.

Six men follow him on-stage and form a shocked semi-circle, whispering behind their hands. Like a madman, Rumi searches all corners of the stage, going up to each man to scrutinize his face. His despair is evident when he does not find the face he's looking for and he collapses center-stage, sobbing:

"SHAMS! SHAMS! SHAMS! SHAMS! SHAMS! SHAMS!"

Yusuf steps towards him, then turns away with a gesture of despair.

YUSUF *(to audience)*: Do you recognize him? That's Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi. Once, there was not a heart in Konya that did not beat for him — and it was he who made our Konya the glory of this land of Rum. His madrassa was the finest centre of learning this side of Kufa. I loved visiting the madrassa — what does it matter that I never learnt to read? I just loved the smell of those books and it was an honour to be in the

presence of the Mevlana! Great scholars came from all over the world to study with him. Good for my business it was too, I can tell you.

(continues sadly): But today the madrassa is as empty as a dead man's shoes. When the scholars stopped coming I stopped making money. Customers are as rare as watermelons in this accursed cold weather. (*Looks up at the sky and shivers*).

Because my purse is light, my heart is heavy. The trouble began a year ago with that dervesh Shamsuddin of Tabriz. One day, he appeared at my shop, asking questions about the Mevlana. If I had known how it would end, I would have driven him away. Instead, look at what happened. The Mevlana became a laughing stock of Konya. The Mevlana —

He is interrupted by a violent cry from Rumi. Commotion on stage, then Rumi runs off-stage, followed by the six onlookers.

Fade Out

SCENE II

Konya. One year earlier. It is the spring of 1245.

The same shop in Konya, selling *halwa*, *shorva* and *naan*. Yusuf, the proprietor is opening up for the day. Business is flourishing and he sings happily as he dusts the benches and tables. From time to time, he calls out to his chef inside:

YUSUF: Ali! Have you started cooking the halwa? Business will be good today, *(sniffs)* I can smell it coming our way!

(He stretches and draws in a deep breath): Ah, in spring Konya is paradise on earth. Pomegranate flowers blossom like rubies on tender green branches. Grapes and watermelons will soon be plentiful and soon the scholars will arrive like migratory summer birds. How I hate the winter when snow cuts us off from the world — so bad for business. Long live Mevlana Rumi. His fame draws hundreds of scholars to Konya and they line my pockets with gold. May the Mevlana's fame grow — and my fortune with it.

Enter a stranger. He's about 60, has an open grey beard and is dressed in the garments of a prosperous merchant.

SHAMS *(to Yusuf)* : *Shorva.*

YUSUF: Some *naan*? And *halwa*? Sir, our *halwa* is famous — it's even better than the *halwa* of Shiraz!

SHAMS *(amused)* : And have you heard the nightingales of Shiraz sing?

YUSUF *(embarrassed)* : No. I've never left Konya.

SHAMS: Then you must love your hometown. Who is the most important man of Konya?

YUSUF: His Highness the Sultan of Konya. But —

SHAMS: But what?

YUSUF *(looks around, before whispering)* : But the Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi, he is the true father of our people.

SHAMS *(aside)* : Mevlana Rumi! The bait that draws me to this distant place. Will he turn out to be the One? Allah, let me find him, the hidden Imam. All my life did I seek him, wandering like a homeless bird until they even forgot my name and called me Parinda. Bird.

(To Yuṣuf) Do you know the Mevlana?

YUSUF *(boastfully)* : You may as well ask: Do I know my own mother? Even a child knows the Mevlana, the greatest teacher in all of Islamdom! Are you a scholar?

SHAMS: Perhaps.

YUSUF: Won't you eat something, sir?

SHAMS *(inattentively)* : Yes, yes, bring me anything.

Enter two young men dressed in the robes of scholars.

YUSUF *(to Shams)*: Here come Hisamuddin Chalpi and Salahuddin Zarkob, the goldsmith. Two of the Mevlana's foremost disciples.

(Raising his voice): Sirs! Won't you come in? I can offer you fresh *shorva*. It's boiling hot, hotter than my wife's temper. Oh, blessed is the man with a deaf-and-dumb wife. Even better if she's blind as well!

CHALPI: How is your wife, Yusuf? You're married to Samia's cousin, aren't you?

YUSUF *(quotes)*: Marriage fills one with energy,
Another it drains.
You may be leading a donkey, no,
a goat, no, who can tell?

CHALPI *(appreciatively)*: The Mevlana's words are on everyone's lips! Even a humble shopkeeper quotes the great Rumi.

YUSUF *(indicating Shams)*: Here's a new student for the Mevlana.

(Yusuf goes in. Chalpi and Zarkob covertly study the stranger.)

CHALPI *(to Zarkob)*: Too old to be a student, don't you think?

ZARKOB: No. Only the dead are too old to learn anything new.

(to Shams): Have you come far, friend?

SHAMS: 'I move from nook to nook in the ruins of a monastery, thinking: the next prayer-place is the place I'm looking for'. I am a traveller from Tabriz.

CHALPI: And your business in Konya?

SHAMS: I am a merchant. They call me Parinda.

ZARKOB: Parinda? Bird? A feathery name for a weighty person.

(Shams acknowledges the compliment with a bow.)

CHALPI: What line of business are you in?

SHAMS: Every object and being in the universe is a jar overfilled with wisdom and beauty. But the café owner here — I heard you call him Yusuf? — can't seem to praise your Mevlana enough. Is he really such a great scholar?

ZARKOB: I need a mouth as wide as the sky to say the nature of Mevlana Rumi. He healed my wounded hunger and anger and made me a poet who sings about joy.

SHAMS *(aside)*: Can it be true? I walked for ten years looking for him. I became a mirror waiting to be illuminated by the face of the Beloved. Has my search truly ended?

CHALPI: The Mevlana's doors are open to all sincere seekers and his lessons delight the heart and illumine the mind.

(to Zarkob): Remember the tale of the female parrot from Hindustan? The *toti*?

Zarkob *(to Shams)*: Listen. Once, a merchant captured a female parrot, a *toti*, and kept her in a golden cage in Persia. He fed her almonds and currants and other expensive delicacies. One day, he was ready to depart for Hindustan on business when the *toti* asked him to tell her fellow parrots about her golden cage and how she lived. After several weeks, the merchant reached Hindustan and espied some parrots perched on a peepul tree. He gave them the *toti's* message. Upon hearing it, one parrot fell to the ground, apparently dead. Upon his return to Persia, the merchant told the *toti* what had transpired. When she heard this, the *toti* too fell down, exactly as the Indian parrot had done. The merchant cried out and opened the cage. In a flash, the *toti* flew away. What happened, you ask? Well, her brother-parrot in Hindustan had demonstrated a clever trick whereby she could escape from her prison — and the irony was that her captor had conveyed the message to her!

Shams *(joyfully)*: Your Mevlana is a wise man. Where is he to be found?

Chalpi: My Mevlana was honoured by Allah and the Sultan whilst still only twenty-one, when even the beard had not darkened his chin. He assumed responsibility as head of the madrassa after his father. Now he has seen five

hundred moons but even a thousand moons will not suffice for me to acquire a fraction of his learning.

SHAMS *(bows)*: Shamsuddin Tabrizi.

The two colleagues bow to him.

ZARKOB: Shamsuddin Tabrizi, ask anyone the way to our madrassa.

Fade Out

Scene III

Next day. Rumi's madrassa. It is a teaching centre, a school/college. Everyone sits on the floor. *Chattai*s (floor mats) are laid out for the students, there are precious hand-written manuscripts to study from and *rehals* (folding stands) to place them on. It is early morning.

Rumi restlessly paces round, then flings himself to the floor to stare pensively out of the window.

Rumi's son, Sultan Walad, and his disciple, Zarkob, stop writing to study him covertly.

RUMI: A sunrise, a sunset, a sunrise, a sunset ... and fifteen years have passed since we laid my respected father to rest in his grave until Judgement Day. And I? I took his place and I became my father. I read and wrote and taught and cared for all who came into my fold, leaving precious little time for reflection. Was that well done? I upheld the dignity of my rank, the responsibility of my chair, but secretly longed to sit silent in some forgotten cave. Is it too late? The gazelle of time flies on swift feet, my son is grown, soon he could make me a grandfather. Will I climb into my father's companion grave wounded with regret? Allah,

where are your Chosen Ones, the hidden jewels of our earth who make life worth living? Grant me the company of your Chosen Ones, Allah, so that my thirsty soul may gaze at their immortal lustre, even if for a moment.

SULTAN: Abba, what ails you?

RUMI *(sighs)*: Where is the cave of my soul that whispers the Truth in silence?

Sultan is puzzled and turns enquiringly to Zarkob.

ZARKOB *(explains)*: It's the yearning of the mystic.

Sultan is obviously baffled.

SULTAN: Abba, the world follows you. Not just in Konya, but in our entire land of Rum none can match you. Then why this dark mood?

RUMI: Son, you will not understand. Back to work — have you seen my copy of the *Asrar Namah*?

SULTAN: Presented to you by the great Attar himself? It's such a rare manuscript that Mother put it away for safekeeping. (*He fetches the manuscript for his father*).

(Silence reigns as the three of them become absorbed in work. Enter Chalpi, looking glum.)

CHALPI: Salam Mevlana.

RUMI: Hisamuddin, what's wrong? You've been away a whole week.

CHALPI: Forgive me Mevlana, my father's younger sister suddenly died. My favourite aunt. Funeral arrangements, the burial ....

RUMI: I am sorry.

CHALPI: She was young, beautiful, a woman with a clever mind. How could she go so suddenly? No illness, no warning.

RUMI: Death shadows life, Hisam.

CHALPI: One minute she was alive, now a mound of earth covers her grave.

RUMI *(observes his extreme distress)*: Comfort is a barren seed when the ground is frozen, still I offer you these words of mine, freshly minted.

SULTAN *(eagerly)*: Is it the one about the mind and the angel?

RUMI *(shakes his head)*: Listen. 'I died to the organic state, became vegetation. I died to become an animal. From animal, I became Adam.

Why should I fear?

When have I become less by dying?

When I die to man, I may soar and lift up my head amongst the angels.'

CHALPI *(bows to Rumi)*: Thank you, Mevlana. Grief chokes me but you make it easier to bear.

SULTAN: Abba Huzoor, a question about grandfather.

They are interrupted by the entry of Shams. Rumi waits for him to settle down.

SULTAN: Abba Huzoor, yesterday, reading the writings of my esteemed grandfather Mevlana Baha-al-din, I found myself wondering why he quit the city of Balkh to embark on the perilous journey to Konya? After all, he enjoyed the patronage of the Sultan of Balkh and happy is the scholar at whose door stands a prince.

RUMI: Your grandfather was wise. He recognized the time was ripe to leave Balkh and he lost nothing by doing so, for in Konya, he enjoyed the favour of our king, Sultan Kaikobad.

SHAMS *(laughs)*: Come! Come! Shall I give the real reason?

Stunned silence greets his rudeness.

SHAMS: Mevlana Baha-al-din left Balkh because he had lost the confidence of its king. He and his rival, Fakhr-al-din Razi, vied for royal patronage and Razi won. Also, don't forget, the Mongols were baying for blood at the gates of Balkh, that's another reason why he left in haste. Call it cowardice, call it prudence, call it what you will.

Sultan is overcome with rage at the insult to his grandfather. He jumps up to tower over Shams, who is seated.

SULTAN: How dare you? Who are you?

CHALPI: He is Shams Tabrizi.

RUMI (*also annoyed but controls himself*): Sultan! *(gestures to him to be quiet)*

(to Chalpi): Some hot *kehwa* for our guest, please.

SHAMS: I'd rather have some wine.

(His request creates a stir.)

RUMI *(to Chalpi)*: Hisam, some wine.

Exit Chalpi. He returns with a beaker of wine and disapprovingly pours out a glass for Shams, who accepts it with a show of pleasure. He raises the glass, silently watched by the others. Instead of drinking it, he suddenly dashes it to the ground.

RUMI *(annoyed)*: Why ask for wine to feed the floor?

SHAMS *(smiles)*: To understand Mevlana Rumi better. I feared you might be a blinkered man of religion but you are far greater than that.

SULTAN *(aside)*: Lunatic! Father should not admit stray men into our madrassa.

CHALPI *(aside)*: Bizarre. Brazen.

SHAMS *(points to the manuscript in Rumi's hands)*: What's that?

RUMI *(sarcastically)*: '*Een cheese ast ke tu nami dani.*' Not something you would understand.

SHAMS: Can I have some water?

RUMI *(controls his anger)*: Sultan, water for our guest.

SHAMS *(stops Sultan with raised hand)*: I will only drink water brought by my eminent host.

Sultan, Chalpi and Zarkob react angrily to this insolence but Rumi is intrigued and decides to humour Shams. Exit Rumi. Shams picks up the rare manuscript, examines it, then carelessly flings it into a small water tank in the room. There is uproar. Sultan rushes to strike Shams. Chalpi runs to the water tank. Hearing the commotion, Rumi runs back into the room.

Shams runs amok. He picks up manuscripts, flings them aside, kicks things about and creates turmoil. Rumi's temper is rising and Shams appears to egg him on to react and retaliate. Rumi controls himself with an effort. The others are less restrained.

ZARKOB *(to Shams)*: Mad man

CHALPI *(to Shams)*: Who are you, Shaitan?

SULTAN *(to Rumi)*: Abba, he has thrown your precious *Asrar Namah* in the tank. It's ruined!

Rumi is enraged but checks himself. With great dignity he points to the door.

RUMI: Out! And don't darken my door again.

Shams is unconcerned. He smiles, plunges an arm into the tank and pulls out the book.

They gasp when they see that it is unharmed and bone dry. Shams places it in Rumi's hands.

RUMI: What? What is this?

SHAMS *(repeats Rumi's earlier words)*:

> *'Een cheese ast ke tu nami dani.'* Not something you would understand.

RUMI *(aside)*: Allah! Have you answered? Is he one of your Chosen Ones?

Rumi faints. Chalpi rushes to attend to him.

Fade Out

SCENE IV

One week later. Rumi's madrassa.

Rumi is very restless and paces about.

Sultan, Chalpi and Zarkob confer amongst themselves whilst covertly studying Rumi.

CHALPI: The Mevlana is still unwell. It was a shock to me when he fainted last week.

ZARKOB: It's the dervesh Shams Tabrizi. I am puzzled by him. How did that manuscript emerge dry from the water?

SULTAN: My father wakes when we sleep and he walks about in the dark night. My mother is deeply upset, I can tell you.

CHALPI: Have you talked to him?

SULTAN: It's no use.

RUMI *(to himself)*: 'Today and yesterday and unfortunate tomorrow and the series of tomorrows allotted to us are surely dreams.' How futile it all seems. Like ants, we gather grains of sand to build anthills, then one storm washes it all away. My skin suddenly feels too tight for me. What's happening. Am I going mad?

Enter Shams. The tension is almost palpable. He strides up to Rumi.

SHAMS: Why do you stay in prison when the door is so wide open?

SULTAN, CHALPI and ZARKOB *(together)*: A prison?

Shams ignores them.

SHAMS *(to Rumi)*: A prison I say. A prison created out of your own longing. For security. For respectability.

RUMI: For scholarship. For learning. And why not respectability? It's not a shameful thing.

SULTAN: How dare you talk to my father like that!

SHAMS: Go, callow youth, and leave us alone. I carry a message for your father, one meant for his ears alone.

SULTAN: Go? It's you who must go! Allah has showered my father with grace: he has status, students, a family. But you? You have nothing. A wanderer, without home or hearth. Bird in name, bird in nature.

RUMI: Sultan! He's our guest!

SULTAN: Abba, how can you permit a stranger to sow discord between us? Who *is* he? What's his business with you?

SHAMS: Out! Go now!

SULTAN: I will not leave Abba alone with you! What did you do to make him faint?

Shams raises his hand as though to strike Sultan. Sultan faces him defiantly. Rumi moves to prevent an ugly row.

RUMI. *(to Sultan)*: Go, my son. Leave us alone.

SULTAN *(defiantly)*: Abba! Beware of strangers, especially birds of prey. Hawks who feed upon rabbits.

RUMI: Sultan, the frost of age begins to turn my beard white. Don't you think I can take care of myself? Go now, all of you.

Sultan mutters, giving dark looks to Shams. He leaves with Chalpi and Zarkob. Rumi looks at Shams. Their eyes lock together. A current appears to pass through them.

SHAMS: Your son asked why you fainted. You died to your old life, Jalaluddin, and that was your new birth. I repeat, why do you stay in prison when the door is so wide open?

RUMI: You call this a prison? My students are the adornments of this kingdom and the king himself frequents our madrassa.

SHAMS: All right, not a prison, a caravanserai then. Whose was this madrassa before it was yours?

RUMI: My father's.

SHAMS: And whose was it before it was your father's?

RUMI: Before that? It was ... it was ... *(splutters with indignation)*

SHAMS: And this place where people come and go, if it's not a caravanserai, what is it then? And why stay here? For the security of having food. Admit it!

RUMI: NO! For love of knowledge.

SHAMS: NO! For love of honours! But the time is ripe, you are pregnant with the true knowledge. Ask yourself: who am I?

RUMI: I am Jalaluddin Rumi. By the grace of Allah, head of this renowned madrassa. Husband of Gohar Khatun and father of Sultan Walad.

SHAMS: I am hungry.

Rumi is astonished by the sudden turn the conversation takes.

SHAMS: I am hungry. What will you offer your guest?

RUMI *(aside)*: Strange man. He asked for wine, then spilt it on the floor. What will he do with the food I offer him? Still, I am bound by the code of hospitality.

(to Shams): As my honoured guest you shall have the choicest food and drink my home can afford.

SHAMS: But I only eat the flesh of "insaan". Can you offer me the flesh of a human being?

Rumi shrinks away from him. Shams eyes him sternly and sits down, as though preparing to eat.

RUMI *(aside)*: A man-eating dervesh? Jalaluddin, what will you do now? I must outwit him.

(to Shams): Since you relish such a rare delicacy, I offer myself. It's not my right to forfeit any other God-given life, but mine is at your disposal. (*Dramatically produces a dagger and points it at his thigh*) shall I slice off a pound or two here? (*points it at his arm*) or here? Or does it have to be the choicest morsel? (*pointing the dagger at his heart*).

SHAMS *(nods)*: First, we will meditate. Come, let us meditate together.

Shams and Rumi meditate together. Lapse of time.

SHAMS: Open your eyes, Jalaluddin. What did you see?

RUMI: Strange things. I saw myself but not as I am. Instead, I was a peacock. A peacock! I don't know what to make of that.

SHAMS *(laughs)*: I hear you're fond of stories, so I'll tell you one. The world teems with vain peacocks, noisy hens, dangerous eagles, frightened rabbits, lazy sloths, and all manner of creatures dressed up as men and women. Do you see it or not? Know thyself, Jalaluddin, that's the only secret. At present, what *are* you? What will you reply when the Angel of Death comes for you and asks: "On what did you dim the lustre of your eyes, on what did you expend the vigour of your youth?" It takes a thousand years just to become a human being and twice as long as that to become an "insaan". I mean, one who truly possesses refined human

qualities. Who are you? A peacock!! (*laughs*) Go home, Jalaluddin. Go back to your safe life, to your king and your throne in the madrassa! Come and see me after two thousand years when you've become truly human, an "insaan".

That strikes a deep chord in Rumi. He goes towards Shams like a sleepwalker and bows to him.

The qawwali on Shams follows. Enter two female dancers who dance to it.

شمس الدین ۔ شمس الدین ۔ شمس الدین ۔ شمس الدین
تبریزی کے قربان جاؤں ہے وہی اک یار مرا
یار مرا غار مرا عشق جگر خوار مرا ۔ عشق جگر خوار مرا
شمس الدین ۔ شمس الدین
نور توئی سور توئی دولت منصور توئی
سینۂ مشروح توئی بردرِ اسرار مرا
روز توئی روزہ توئی حاصل دریوزہ توئی
آب توئی کوزہ توئی آبِ دہِ یار مرا
شمس الدین شمس الدین شمس الدین
قطرہ توئی بحر توئی لطف توئی قہر توئی
قند توئی رند توئی بیشں آزار مرا
شمس الدین شمس الدین شمس الدین

Shams-ud-din shams-ud-din
shams-ud-din shams-ud-din —

Tabrizi ke qurban jaoon hai wohi ik yaar mora

Yar mora, ghar mora, ishqi-jigar-khwar mora

Shams-ud-din ....

Noor tuhi, sur tuhi, daulat-I-mansoor tuhi

Sina-I-mushrooh tuhi, bur dur-I-asrar mora

Roze tuhi, roza tuhi, kuzey tuhi, has-l-i-daryuza tuhi

Ab tuhi, kuza tuhi, aab dah-e-yar mora

Shams-ud-din............

Qtra tuhi, behr tuhi, lutf tuhi, qehr tuhi

Qund tuhi, rind tuhi, besh-e-az'ar mora

Shams-ud-din............

SCENE V

Rumi's Khanqah. A mystic centre of learning where great sufis teach their students. It is a hall with *chattais* on the floor.

Shams and Rumi are locked up together in *sohbet* (discourse) for 40 days and nights, an intoxicating period of discourse, of enlightenment.

They are seen in silhouette against a screen backstage, seated facing each other in the traditional meditative pose of sufis. *Black out.*

Spotlight picks out Shams and Rumi as they enter from stage left. Their discourse continues . . .

SHAMS: Little by little, wean yourself. This is the gist of what I have to say. You ask the embryo why he, or she, stays cooped up in the dark with eyes closed. Listen to the answer: "There is no 'other world'. I only know what I've experienced." You are that embryo, Jalaluddin. Break free of scholarly knowledge and religious dogma. Stop reading your father's writings. Find your own words.

RUMI: But those who go before us light the way.

SHAMS: No! Parroting the words of others, you will end up becoming a spiritual window shopper who asks the price of everything but buys nothing. On Judgment Day when the *farishta*, Angel Gabriel blows his bugle and you face your Maker what will you say?

RUMI: That I lived under the guidance of my learned father for a quarter of a century.

SHAMS: That makes you dependent and subservient.

RUMI: That Sultan Ala-ud-din Kaikobad selected me to head the madrassa at a young age.

SHAMS: Perhaps out of respect for your father.

RUMI: That I was a student of the distinguished Burhan-ud-din Muhaqqiq Tirmidhi, a demanding taskmaster. And after that I studied at the great universities of Halab and Damascus.

SHAMS: So you became famous in social and religious circles. Is that enough for you?

RUMI: That I built my reputation as a teacher and have many eminent scholars as my disciples.

SHAMS: So you became a hunter of fame and fortune! How much better if you had instead become a hunter of God!

RUMI: Religion is about God.

SHAMS: Religion of the heart, yes. Not the monuments of stone you cherish, along with the illusion of time.

Rumi: Meaning?

Shams: "The lust of possession blinds the heart. The lust of rank and place keeps you apart. Take heed, attend and you shall know how blind greed sucks you in its undertow." Know thyself, Jalaluddin.

Rumi: "There are so many selves, so many selves swimming like eels in the liquid of my mind, so many fickle impressions, which one is me?"

Shams: That's the quest. The only treasure worth having.

Rumi: And my work here? The madrassa? My family, my students — they depend upon me.

Shams: Time servers all. They'll go with the rising sun, but first they'll oppose you on the path for selfish reasons.

Rumi: And where is the ladder on which I may climb to heaven?

Shams: It's love. Learn to love.

Rumi: I love many.

Shams: Bah! Earthly loves! They are a mere shadow of Divine love. Seek the love that burns like a sword emerging from the furnace; love that is vertigo of heaven; love that cannot be caged by words.

Rumi: Your words instil in me the courage of a thousand lions!

SHAMS: The path unveils itself for those who walk with courage. You are THAT, Jalaluddin.

RUMI: No, no, it's you who are my guide, my teacher. I was raw, now I am ripening. My knowledge was borrowed, my wisdom second-hand.

"O master! Two in form two in figure, two to the outward eye. We are One, you and I."

Shams shakes his head.

SHAMS: No, Jalaluddin Rumi is the ocean and I the river that runs to merge with the ocean. It was not by accident I came to Konya. I was sent by my sheikh, Rukn-al-din.

RUMI: I am indebted to Sheikh Rukn-al-din. We'll never be parted, I'll not let you return to Tabriz. We will hold many such *sohbets* and celebrate God's glory in prayer.

SHAMS: Only in prayer? Why not in music? And dance?

RUMI: Music? Dance? But that's forbidden to us!

SHAMS: By whom? Not by Him! The Master, our Father. The Creator created everything in the world, including music and dance, so who are we to turn our backs on his creation?

The novel concept strikes Rumi forcefully.

SHAMS: Break the old mould and open your newborn eyes. Rise up to heaven on the silken sounds of your

song, delight Him with sublime poetry, let your dancing feet tap out your joy that He is here, He is here!

Rumi jumps up in ecstasy. He makes a symbolic gesture of casting aside his old robes. Gently, he stretches out his arms and slowly whirls round a couple of times: it is the moment of creation of the Whirling Dervesh Dance.

RUMI *(laughs exultantly)*: We are one, you and I. The gorgeous Birds of Paradise will envy us when we melt in secret laughter. No longer a stranger, you listen all day to these crazy love-words.

SHAMS: Lover of stories, I will tell you one about the hungry lion and the cunning fox. A fox duped an ass and led him to the lion so that the lion may eat and the fox would get the remains. But, crazed with hunger, the lion jumped too early and the ass escaped. Again, the fox went to lure the ass, who said: "Begone, Ugly One! You attempted to shed my life-blood once. With what face do you return?" The fox replied: "That's all in your imagination, O simpleton! I bear you no malice. An evil imagination can kill a thousand friendships." By lies and deceit, the crafty fox once again duped the ass and led him to the lion. This time the lion did not miss. He ate his fill and went for a drink of water. In his absence, the fox ate the ass's heart and liver. The lion returned and looked for the organs but the fox told him: "The ass did not possess a heart or liver. If

he had, do you think he would have come here a second time?"

They laugh.

SHAMS: But I cannot be always with you. I will have to go.

Rumi stops dancing abruptly.

RUMI: Go where? Have I offended you in any way?

SHAMS: Jalaluddin, my footsteps have worn down the earth searching for you. How could you possibly offend me? But I have a tryst to keep.

RUMI *(relieved)*: A tryst? I thought you said you were going to leave me. If it's only an appointment, we could call that person here.

SHAMS: An appointment with kismet, my destiny. One night in Tabriz the stars descended upon earth and the moon was a silvery mystery and, overcome with longing, I cried out "Allah! Show me one of your beloved ones!" And a voice answered. "What will you give in exchange?" Without hesitation, I replied: "My head!" The celestial voice boomed out: "The hidden truth you seek is Jalal-ud-din RUMI." And a deal was struck. For what is death to one who loves?

RUMI: Impossible! That cannot be.

SHAMS: It is written. Someone close to you, someone you love will betray you.

Sultan storms in. There is a hiatus.

SULTAN: Abba Huzoor!

RUMI: Shams and I are in *sohbet*. You're interrupting us.

SULTAN: Abba, we have seen many *sohbets*, but not of this sort. 40 days and nights of hunger and thirst. People are talking ...

(gestures towards Shams)

SHAMS: Jealous youth! Go, leave us alone.

SULTAN *(to audience)*: I must save Abba. Dance and music is forbidden and now look at him. Just because of that homeless dervesh Shams, Abba is dancing. Dancing! God save us! The shaitan has cast his evil eye on us and we find ourselves sitting on a volcano. I can see the contempt in people's eyes for my father. Ungrateful wretches. My father, who has nurtured this town with his knowledge!

(to Shams): Go back where you came from and leave us alone.

RUMI: Sultan! Shams is my honoured guest, my friend. Apologize to him.

SULTAN *(stares mutinously at his father):* I will not.

RUMI: Very well, go then. Go! And don't dare disturb us again.

Sultan furiously strides off towards stage right. He pauses near the wing.

SULTAN *(to audience)*: Abba is blind, like Samson. Amma is helpless but I will not permit that old dervesh to ruin my family. Singing and dancing? What next? Whores? It's half a whorehouse already, thanks to that — that Parinda! The world was at Abba's feet. respect, virtue, honour were his. And all this will be mine after him. Mine! Unless I allow the devil to wreck everything. I'll not tolerate it. Either Shams goes or I do.

Exit Sultan.

Rumi and Shams become absorbed again in their sohbet. *Slowly, Rumi begins to whirl again.*

RUMI: Loosen an intellectual knot and the sack is empty.

SHAMS: So loosen a few more. Why knot?

They enjoy the pun and laugh. Shams joins him in the whirling dance.

RUMI: Hunger is the best medicine.

SHAMS: Anxiety, the mother of indigestion, raises a hundred other afflictions in you.

They forget the outside world.

SHAMS *(aside)*: It is He! Shams, what matters your life before the lustre of this divine gift? Ha! Small change.

A male dancer renders dance to the following composition.

رات اور دن رومی ناچے	حیراں ہو گئی ساری خدائی
گریہ و زاری امبر پہ گونجی	خلقت دیتی دہائی دہائی
بھٹک گیا مولانا رومی	اس نے کیا یہ صورت بنائی
دین و دنیا ساری بھلا کے	دولت اپنی خوب لٹائی
دیوانوں سا حال بنایا	چھوڑ کے اپنی ساری پڑھائی

r'at aur din Rumi n'ache
hairan ho gayee s'ari khudai
r'at aur din............
giria-o-z'ari amber pe goonji
khalqat deti duhai duhai
r'at aur din ....
bhatak gaya mevlana Rumi
is ne kia hai s'urat banai
r'at aur din............
din-o-duniya s'ari bhula ke
daulat apni khoob lutai
r'at aur din............
div'ano sa h'al banaya
chorh ke apni s'ari parhai
r'at aur din ....

End of Act I

Act II
Scene I

The court of Vizier Nusaratadin. *Chattai*s cover the floor and everyone sits on them. Risal-al-din, the Vizier's courtier, is also present and they prepare for a seminar whilst awaiting the arrival of the scholars.

RISAL: Sir, before the scholars arrive, I need to acquaint you with some disturbing developments. Mevlana Rumi, hitherto the pillar of our city, is transformed — you could even say that he's a man possessed.

VIZIER: How so? What's possessed him?

RISAL: Your worship, they say he's possessed by Love.

VIZIER *(laughs)*: Love?! At his age? And he has a grown up son too!

RISAL: No, no, not that sort of love, Your Worship. He claims to have become a Lover of God. And it's none other but the wandering dervesh Shams Tabrizi who has brought about this great change in the Mevlana.

VIZIER: Explain yourself.

RISAL: Their brand of love is unfettered, unrestrained by our religious institutions and our clergy. A dangerous brand, Your Worship! They acknowledge only the Divine.

It has come to my ears that they — the Mevlana and the dervesh — spend days and nights alone locked up in continuous *sohbet*, deaf to the entreaties of the world.

VIZIER: Love! You say they do not bow their head to priests and places of worship? You're right, such love threatens our law and order — indeed it threatens our very state! There will be anarchy if the state loses its grip on the individual.

RISAL: Huzoor, that's not all. They say the Mevlana is even singing now.

VIZIER: Singing? It doesn't befit the Mevlana's status to be singing like a clown!

RISAL: It reeks of rebellion to me — even though they say they sing in praise of God. Remember the rebellion of Mansur-al-Hallaj? Your Worship is well aware that al-Hallaj stubbornly refused to complete the recitation of the Kalmah until he climbed up the scaffold and the noose was tightened around his neck. Then, *and only then*, when the breath was being choked from his body, did he recite the full Kalmah.

VIZIER: Surely the Mevlana hasn't gone as far as that? Could he have forgotten himself so completely?

RISAL: Here comes the son and the disciples of the Mevlana.

Enter Sultan Walad, Hisamudin Chalpi and Zarkob. After salaam dua they take their seats.

RISAL: Honourable Vizier, do we have your permission to begin?

VIZIER *(looks around)*: How can we start without the Mevlana? Sultan, is your father coming?

SULTAN: Yes sir, he said he would.

RISAL: I am afraid the Mevlana neglects his duties.

CHALPI *(aside)*: Alas, it's not been possible to keep our affairs secret. Does everyone in the city know? Even the king?

SULTAN *(to Chalpi)*: Abba's new friend has blackened our faces! When will this nightmare end?

The Vizier notices them whispering.

VIZIER: Sultan, I hear reports that the Mevlana has changed his opinion on music and dance.

Sultan shame-facedly bows his head.

RISAL: Konya watched helplessly as Mevlana Rumi abandoned his books and his students. But now, to consort with musicians ... !

VIZIER: We hear the Mevlana is locked in long *sohbets* with Shams Tabrizi. Friends are necessary, I say, to spend pleasant evenings with but life's serious business is work and family. To neglect duty for friends — well!

RISAL: The Mevlana has been seen doing *sama* in the streets of Konya, dancing like the dervesh Shams Tabrizi. What sort of friendship is that?

Sultan grows visibly angry and is scarcely able to bear the insults to his family.

RISAL: It has been reported to us that Shams said "Thousands of Shams-I-Tabrizi would be no more than a mote of dust in the vast tower of Rumi's greatness."

The Vizier expresses his astonishment.

RISAL: And that the Mevlana, after a *sohbet* lasting for 40 days and nights, said: "I was unripe and I have ripened. I stood like a mountain, my legs firm. But no mountain is so strong that Shams would not sweep up like a wisp of straw and carry it away."

VIZIER: The Mevlana pays such big tribute to a wandering dervesh? Had he said it of the king, we might have understood, but — this is scandalous!

Sultan screams in rage, unable to bear it any longer.

Enter Shams and Rumi. A sudden hush descends upon all.

Shams greets the Vizier then crosses the stage to sit alone.

Rumi inexplicably sits where the others have left their shoes.

The Vizier is shocked.

VIZIER: Mevlana, what's the meaning of this? Your place is there — in the centre.

RUMI: The centre is where the shoes are. That's where the 'sadir' is.

Shocked silence greets his words.

The Vizier is clearly uncomfortable but attempts to control the situation.

VIZIER: Let us proceed. Sultan Walad, what is your dissertation on?

SULTAN: Farid-ud-din Attar's great masterpiece: *Mantiq-ut-tair*. The Conference of the Birds.

The others settle down.

SULTAN *(continues)*: Attar, the famous chemist from Nishapur, narrates in his book how the birds said one day: "Men have a king, animals have the lion, fish have the whale, but who do we have?" So, they decided to search for a king. They had heard of the splendid Simurgh who was reputed to live on the Koh Qaf mountain. Convinced that he was the king they sought, they decided to undertake the perilous journey to Koh Qaf mountain. Many birds dropped out on one pretext or the other even before they started. Eventually, thirty thousand birds took to the air but the journey was so gruelling, so dangerous, that only thirty birds reached their destination alive. And did they find their king in the Simurgh? Well, after all that, they discovered that

the Simurgh was a riddle, to which the answer is that they had no king except themselves. The message of Attar is: There's nothing outside of ourselves. Look for what you search within yourself.

SHAMS *(aside)*: So, we must become birds in order to discover who we are!

Shams flaps his arms like a bird. Rumi laughs but the others disapprove.

SULTAN: Attar's message is identical to that of Mansur-al-Halaj: I am He.

چوں نمی گویم اناالحق یاری گوید بگو   چوں نمی گویم مرادلداری گوید بگو

Chu nami goem an-al-huq y'ar mi goed bugo

Chu nami goem, mara dild'ar me goed bugo.

RISAL: Mansur-al-Hallaj was accused of blasphemy and hanged by the neck until dead. That too is a message, a warning to others!

VIZIER: Hisam-ud-din Chalpi, what's the theme of your paper?

CHALPI: I have selected as my theme the tale of Shibli, the rebel philosopher. One day in ecstasy, he tried to kill himself. He was clapped in chains and dragged away to the lunatic house but he asked his captors: "If I am mad, are you sane?"

SULTAN *(aside)*: We have a mad one in our midst! *(points at Shams)*

CHALPI: Shibli refused to take any medicine. When people visited him, he would ask "Who are you?" "Your friends!" they replied but he pelted them with stones and they ran away. Shibli screamed at them, "You're friends to yourselves, not to me!"

Shams, who had been growing restless, suddenly jumps up.

SHAMS: Parrots! Will you waste your lives mouthing the words of this scholar or that? When will you learn to say "My heart was inspired by God!" Why walk with the aid of someone else's staff? Where are your own words?

They are stunned by this abrupt intervention.

SULTAN: Sir, how dare you insult the respected scholars of this 'majlis'!

RUMI: Sultan!

SULTAN: Enough's enough, Abba! Shams has destroyed our lives.

RUMI: Sultan, don't air your family squabbles in public!

VIZIER: Forgive me, Mevlana, this has ceased to be your domestic concern. The madrassa is deserted, foreign students have abandoned Konya and the malodour of disrepute hangs like a dirty cloud over our city. This matter now concerns all of us.

SULTAN *(aside)*: Oh, the shame of it!

(to Rumi): Abba, the people of Konya cry out in one voice: Shams Tabrizi must leave!

CHORUS: Shams must go! Shams must go!

RUMI: No! I was like an unstrung sitar until Shams gifted me my voice. Can you pull a veil over the sun? Can you prevent the tide from turning? No! Shams will not leave. If he leaves, so will I. Is that what you want, Sultan? To drive your father away?

SHAMS: No Jalal! In my path there is no hardness. No rigidity, no violence, no dogma, no judgement, no issues. Instead, whirl and rejoice, find the ruby of Love in your heart. Grasp the moment and make it infinite beyond the curving snake of passing time and space. Gather your strength and sacrifice yourself upon His golden altar! Are you ready for that? My path is not easy but it's the only one worth following.

SULTAN: Your path? What path? Singing and dancing in the streets like a mad man? The Mevlana was a respected man of Allah, the greatest scholar between here and Cheen, until you came into our lives. What does a wild dervesh like you know of respectability and family life?

RUMI: Sultan! Your tongue is a sharp weapon. Be careful that it doesn't end up destroying your life.

SULTAN: Abba, the whole of Konya is whispering that Mevlana Rumi has forfeited his moral authority. I cannot bear the disgrace.

VIZIER: Sultan! Mevlana, I request you to sort it out before the fire scorches us all.

SHAMS: The Mevlana has to sort out nothing because I am leaving. I've never been so insulted in my life!

Shams rises and strides away but Rumi bars his path.

SHAMS: I must go. Now.

RUMI: Forgive them, for they are but children in the spiritual life. They denounce the very sun that nourishes them, gives them life. There is not one who can shun sunlight.

A voice off-stage gently calls Shams' name. It electrifies him and his body is taut as he strains to listen. No one else can hear it.

Spotlight on Shams. He knows that death beckons him.

SHAMS: Time passes, wearing out all clocks. I must redeem my pledge made on that silvery night long ago in Tabriz when I cried out in despair: Oh God, show me your Chosen One. I was dead, dead, dead deep in the basement of darkness. The answer came softly on the night: Jalaludin Rumi is the one you seek. Then I shot into life. I was stricken with grief, then I exploded with laughter. Love vibrated in me, I became the vibration.

In return, I pledged my head. What matters this old head of matted hair? My eyes have seen the shining vision of his face, my ears have heard the celestial heartbeat and I am content. Some may think I go to the torture but I go to my Beloved. Sleep's angel shepherds its flock of spirits towards spectral cities and the spirit is freed from the cell of the sleeping body and drab images of its daily senses. Jalaluddin, you have no more need for this spark of mine for your fire burns eternal. Only God can see God in all God's beauty as a mirror unto God.

Exit Shams. He goes to his death.

Sultan follows him out.

Rumi runs behind them but is arrested by the sound of a cry off stage. The voice is of Shams and the cry is that of a soul in mortal agony.

SHAMS: ALLAH! Allah!

Rumi's movement is arrested. He slowly collapses into a heap on the floor.

Fade Out

Scene II

Rumi's home. The home of a Sufi, it has floor *chattais* for sleeping. There is also a *charpoy* (like a bed) for sitting, a collection of manuscripts. In a corner is a *chakki* (grinding mill).

It is evening. Gohar Khatun, Rumi's wife, is alone. There is an air of mourning.

GOHAR: That night at the Vizier's court my world dropped into an abyss. What happened? My son Sultan says one thing, others say other things and my husband says nothing at all. He will not speak.

She tidies and dusts out of habit but her heart is not in it.

One whole week has passed and no one has come near us. Why? I don't know. Is it something the Mevlana did? I don't know anything because nobody tells me. I only know that Shams has disappeared and my husband has lost his mind.

(sighs) Where is Jalal now? He rarely comes home and has not slept a single night at home since the day Shams disappeared.

The door opens and she looks up eagerly. Enter Rumi. He does not notice her.

RUMI: Shams! How long must I wait?

Spreads his arms and attempts to fly. Falls. His wife runs to pick him up, sobbing.

GOHAR: Husband, Come, sit awhile. *(Guides him to the bed).*

(To audience): I've lost my husband and my son, my home is dark and empty. Not so long ago, our house was the *sadr*, the centre of high activity, a place of plenty, overflowing with meat and grain and honey, but now even the mice have run away.

RUMI: Parinda, you could not be caged.
the grief armies assemble
A fire has risen above my tombstone hat
I don't want learning, or dignity
Or respectability
I want this music and this dawn
And the warmth of your cheek against mine.

He sobs, then continues sadly:

When Shams returns from Tabriz
He'll put his head round the door
To surprise us—and how we will rejoice!

GOHAR: My husband, you have not eaten for days.

RUMI *(laughs)*: Hunger is the king of medicine *(sighs)* but there's no cure for what afflicts me.

GOHAR: You must eat, husband. Don't punish your body so.

RUMI: What cause to live if those we live for are lost?

GOHAR *(to audience)*: How he hurts me. For Shamsuddin he will lay down his life by starving himself. What is a woman? First father, then husband, then her son, if she is widowed, becomes her keeper. I gave my life to my husband and now look! He no longer hears me, he's turned me into a phantom. If he doesn't eat, soon he'll become a ghost himself.

(to Rumi): Islam forbids us to take our own life.

RUMI: My hunger is dead. "Here a world, there a world, I am seated on the threshold."

GOHAR: Such talk has ruined us.

RUMI: Under the ruin there is a royal treasure.

GOHAR: Our life is like a tattered quilt that no longer covers our shame. How long will you search for Shams?

RUMI: A traveller told me that Shams is in Damascus. I rewarded the man with my robe.

GOHAR: In Damascus? And you gave him your precious sufiana robe? You believed him?

RUMI *(bitterly)*: If I had believed him, I would have given him my life, not merely my robe.

GOHAR: So you think Shams is dead?

RUMI *(violently)*: "Who dare say that? Who dare say that immortal one has met his death? Who dare say the sun has set?

Lo! An enemy of the sun came up to the roof, closed his eyes and exclaimed, The sun, has set!"

که گفت که آن زندهٔ جاوید بمرد
که گفت که آفتاب امید بمرد
آن دشمن خورشید برآمد بر بام
دو چشم ببست و گفت خورشید بمرد

Ke guft 'an zinda javed bamurd
Ke guft ke aft'ab umeed bamurd
'andushman khurshid bur 'amad bur baam
do chasm babast guft khurishid bamurd

GOHAR: If Shams is alive, then why grieve?

RUMI: Because you have driven him away. Without Shams there's no life. He touched the very core of my existence.

Gohar makes a gesture of despair but when she speaks, it is to comfort her husband.

GOHAR: Shams *will* return, you *will* meet again. But don't neglect yourself so, husband, don't be so hard on yourself. You're the peerless Mevlana with mighty scholars for students. For their sake, for *my* sake, don't abandon them.

RUMI: My heart grows weary of weak companions. I desire Rustom, son of Zal, but they say he's not to be found. A thing that is not to be found is my desire.

GOHAR: Jalal, take pity on me. Think of your son, think of Sultan.

RUMI: Silence! I have no son. Sultan hated Shams, he was jealous. Ha! Should a candle be jealous of the sun? The sun is immortal, a candle is killed by one single breath — phoo!

GOHAR: It is rumoured that some men killed Shams and ...

RUMI: Shams is not dead.

Gohar despairs.

مولوی هرگز نشد مولای روم   تا غلام شمس تبریزی نشد

Maulavi hargiz na shudh

maula-I-rum ta ghulam-I-Shams Tabrizi na shudh.

Rumi runs out. She watches him go with tears in her eyes.

Fade Out

SCENE III

A fortnight later. Yusuf's shop. There are no customers.

YUSUF: How I wish the glory days would return to Konya. Those visiting scholars were good for business. The townspeople don't like to spend money—tighter than an ant's arse I can tell you. Oh, how I rue the day Shams came to the café. Had I known the consequences, I would have driven him out of town.

Rumi, followed by his wife, Gohar Khatun and his disciple Chalpi, enter.

YUSUF: Perhaps they will eat some *halwa* instead of just drinking *shorva*. Not much money in that for me, I can tell you.

He approaches them hopefully.

RUMI: "We wait anxiously for tears of grief, to spill over like lava onto our cheeks."

GOHAR: Jalal, husband, there is much to live for. Shake off this grief that envelopes you like a shroud.

RUMI: Shams is gone. "Look at the unreaped horizon dancing. In this desert of our restless hearts fitful spirits are fleeting impressions."

GOHAR: Don't imagine the worst.

RUMI: Imagination is dead, hope is dead, happiness is dead, because Shams is absent.

YUSUF *(to audience)*: Pity Gohar Khatun. A good wife, if ever there was one. Not like mine, brimming with demands and complaints. Wants the latest clothes from Samarkand, she does. As if I am made of gold!

CHALPI *(aside)*: It is Gohar Khatun who gives us unspoken lessons in love. The sort of love that Shams evoked: unconditional, undemanding, unstinting. It is she, my master's wife, who is the true image of love.

Fade Out

SCENE IV

Rumi's home, the same as before. Gohar Khatun is alone.

GOHAR KHATUN *(to audience)* : That Shams, he came into our life like a whirlwind and disappeared like the sun at night. When he came I was angry, *very angry,* I must confess. Is it the business of grown-up men to laugh and sing and dance like children? But, slowly, I realized how happy Jalal was, how *complete he felt,* and I forgave Shams. I even began to like the old man. After all, I love my husband and embrace everything that makes him happy.

Enter Sultan, her son, looking weary and uneasy.

SULTAN: Shams. Shams! I am sick of that name.

GOHAR: Shams is a wise old man of God. It's not for nothing that your Abba reveres him—you must trust your Abba. May Allah restore Shams to us.

SULTAN: Shams will not return!

His mother is shocked.

GOHAR: Sultan! You must curb your anger. Hatred will poison your being.

SULTAN: Ammi, the ground was slipping away from beneath you feet and you didn't even feel a tremor! Are you blind? Do you listen to what people say?

GOHAR: Sultan! Remember I am your mother.

SULTAN: My mother is a woman cloistered in the walls of our home. But I am a man of the world and it is I who've had to face our public disgrace.

GOHAR: What disgrace? Your father is a great man, you're but an untried youth. Do not presume to judge him.

SULTAN: Spoken like a true wife!

GOHAR: A true son would search the corners of the earth for Shams and bring him back.

SULTAN: We searched Konya with flaming torches all night and all day in the light of the sun. Sun! How I hate that word. Sun. Shams. Shams. Sun. I will never enjoy sunshine again because it reminds me of *him.*

GOHAR: If you had searched hard you would have found him.

SULTAN: The dead do not walk the earth. They say seven men waited for Shams outside the vizier's court and killed him.

His mother screams and covers her ears.

Sultan continues relentlessly, as though he relishes the words.

SULTAN: They say his body lies at the bottom of a well with many bloody knife wounds. Shams can do us no more harm. The worms are feasting on him now.

GOHAR: It's not true! It can't be!

SULTAN: If it's not true, then where is Shams now?

GOHAR: Perhaps he returned to Tabriz. That's his home, after all.

Sultan laughs wildly.

His mother shrinks from him. She is afraid.

SULTAN: To Tabriz?! My poor Ammi. He's dead, Ammi. Dead, dead, dead.

GOHAR: How can you be so sure?

SULTAN: I am sure because it was I who —

He stops abruptly, having said more than he intended.

Slowly, horrified understanding dawns on his mother's face.

GOHAR: *You?*

SULTAN *(blusters)*: Why do you look at me like that?

GOHAR: You?

SULTAN: Hadn't we suffered enough?

GOHAR: Allah preserve us.

She turns her back on her son and never looks at his face again.

SULTAN: Ammi, we are safe now.

GOHAR: Safe? Peace has fled from our home, never to return.

SULTAN: Ammi, look at me.

GOHAR: Go, leave me alone. I am sick at heart. Was it for this I nursed you at my bosom as a baby? Your father gave you life: was it for this? Go now before I curse you, for a mother's curse is heavy with the wrath of God.

Sultan stares back at her but does not dare to touch her. He turns away dejectedly.

SULTAN: I never thought it would turn out like this. The past was bad enough but the present is disastrous and the future looks catastrophic. I only meant to teach Shams a lesson. A scuffle, a few nicks with the knife. That's all I had in mind. Like this and this (*he frenziedly cuts the air with an imaginary knife, quite forgetting his surroundings*). I calculated that after Shams we could go back to being the way we were. But can one ever go back? Now Abba has lost his mind, he roams the streets crying out for Shams. And my mother turns away from me in horror. Oh, if only what is done could be undone! Too late.

Exit Sultan.

Gohar Khatun turns round slowly. She has suddenly aged. She wanders aimlessly, as though in a dream.

GOHAR: My son. What dreams I dreamt for you! All this was to have been yours after your father. What will be your inheritance now? Oh, I speak not of the students and the madrassa because my heart tells me they will return. The light of Mevlana Rumi cannot remain hidden just as the divine sun must shine through every day. No, I speak of your inheritance of the heart, the heart that only knows how to love, that sees man's soul and loves the truth in it. Your heart will never know that love. Restless days and tormented nights are your lot now. I forgive you, for you're my son and I can do no less, but Allah preserve your father.

Fade Out

Scene V

One year later. It is the summer of 1246.

Yusuf's shop. As usual, he stands outside, on the lookout for customers whilst pretending to be busy.

YUSUF: It was a year ago that Shams Tabrizi came to Konya. In fact, it was a day very like this one, and I was right here, opening shop for the day. When a stranger appeared.

Enter Chalpi.

YUSUF: Chalpi Saheb, please be seated.

Chalpi gloomily sits down.

YUSUF: Why are you so gloomy? Is it the Mevlana? Tchh, tchh, tchh. Wanders the streets as though he has no home to return to! A sacrifice to that Shams Tabrizi! Who was that dervesh? I never did understand. Why did he have such a profound effect on our Mevlana?

Chalpi's loyalty to Rumi is such that he does not encourage the shopkeeper who, after waiting for a reply, goes in.

CHALPI *(to himself)*: Yes, who was Shams Tabrizi and why did he influence Mevlana Rumi so deeply? Zarkob and I have discussed nothing else for months. My

master totally forgot himself and became a shadow, Of what? Of Shams? No, not Shams. We felt sure there must be a deeper explanation and Zarkob thinks it is this: Shams was the divine instrument to jolt the Mevlana out of this earthly dream-trance. We believe, Zarkob and I, that our master is the shadow of God on earth. We always felt it was so. But a shadow is insubstantial, blunt, dull. Now the Mevlana is like tempered steel. A furnace is fiery, it's agony, but the finest blades emerge from it. Our Mevlana has suffered terribly—I would have gladly suffered in his stead if I only could. But now my Mevlana is the sword of God. The most divine utterances pour from those holy lips. I try and catch each word and secretly write it down later.

Yusuf enters with a plate of naan *and a bowl of* shorva *for Chalpi.*

Enter Rumi. His appearance is terrible.

RUMI: How long must I wait, Shams? How long must I search from one unfriendly house to another? How long will you evade me from corner to corner and from alley to alley.

چند کنم ترا طلب   خانه بخانه در بدر
چند گریزی از برم   گوشه بگوشه کو بکو

Chand kunam tura talab kh'ana bakhana,

Dur badur chand gurezi az baram,

Gosha bagosha ko bako.

Chalpi runs to Rumi and gently makes him sit. Rumi appears to be unaware of what's happening to him.

RUMI:

آلا یا شمس تبریزی چرا مستی و مدهوشی
بجز یا هو و یا من هو دیگر چیزی نمی دانم

Alla ya Shams Tabrizi chira masti wa madhoshi

Bajuz ya hu wa ya mun hu digar cheezi nami danam.

CHALPI: Yusuf, a glass of *shorva* for Mevlana huzoor.

RUMI: I am not alive.
You smell the decay?

Chalpi is in despair.

CHALPI: Does he no longer hear me?

RUMI: "Yesterday was glory and joy
Today, a blackened burn everywhere.
I'm not at home here,
Here in this place of distraction.
What am I doing here,
How did I get on to this hard road.

If only this strange neighbourhood
Had hint of him — by God."

Chalpi quickly takes notes.

Off-stage is heard the beat of a goldsmith at work. The rhythmic sound of the hammer arrests Rumi's attention. He raises his head and listens attentively. Music is heard. The hammer-blows grow louder and more musical, their crescendo rising. Slowly, as though in a trance, Rumi rises from his chair and taps his feet to the rhythm. Then he begins to dance the whirling dervish dance.

Chalpi and Yusuf watch him puzzled. As Rumi dances, the tension appears to ebb away from him and he is at last free of grief.

CHALPI *(falls on his knees)*: Allah be praised. *(he sobs with relief).*

CHALPI: It's Zarkob, the goldsmith, at work. My Mevlana's greatest disciple and my colleague, my mentor.

The stage grows dark with a spot on the dancing Rumi. The cyclorama curtain is backlit and the shadow of Shams appears. Rumi ecstatically dances with the shadow of Shams.

Rumi sings.

There will be kathak dance performed by two females with this song.

ای دل سوی دلدار شو ای یار سوی یار شو
ای پاسبان بیدار شو خفته نشاید پاسبان

هر سوی بانگ و مشغله هرکوی شمع و مشعله
کامشب جهان حامله زاید جهان جاودان

Ai dil suey dild'ar sho, ai y'ar suey y'ar sho

Ai pasb'an bed'ar sho, khufta nishyed p'asban

Har suey b'ang o mash ghal'a, har kuey sham'a o mashala

Kamshub jah'an hamla, zayed jah'an javed'an.

Fade Out

Scene VI

Rumi's madrassa.

Rumi is healed and sits calmly.

Chalpi sits on the floor nearby, his reed pen poised on parchment. Chalpi has made a pot of ink at home and it stands at his elbow.

Rumi smiles at him and begins to dictate.

RUMI: "I found treasure in the form of a maker of gold leaf, Zarkob." His gold hammer spoke to me. Lift the darkness, it said. Unveil the Sun. for Shams is immortal. Shams is with me forever.

Pause as Rumi is lost in thought.

RUMI *(continues)*:

Listen oh listener to my plaintive cry,
Listen to my longing or else I die.
From the sweet home of my bed I was torn,
So my pain and crucial longing was born.
Oh for a friend to know my burning state,
That our souls may mingle and contemplate.
Do you wish to know the fire, the flow?
Listen my listener then you shall know.

I have found him.

Shams is with me forever.

ای عاشقان ای عاشقان هنگام کوچست از جهان
در گوش جانم میرسد طبل رحیل از آسمان

نک ساربان برخاسته قطارها آراسته
از ما حلالی خواسته چه خفته اید ای کاروان

Ai ashiqan, ai ashiqan hungama-I-kcuhast az jahan

Dur gosh janum mirsud tabl'e raheel az asm'an

nik s'arb'an burkhasat qat'arha 'ar'asta

Az ma halali khwasta cheh khufta eid ai k'arv'an.

Chalpi scribbles away furiously. Rumi observes him and laughs.

RUMI: Hisam, when your hand aches and your ink runs dry, when hunger gnaws at your guts but you have not my permission to eat, blame not me but yourself! You started me on the *Masnavi-i-Manavi*, a compendium of human thoughts. You know what that means? Swifter than light, more dense than stone and bigger than the ocean are the thoughts contained in a single human mind. They will find us still sitting here on Judgement Day!

CHALPI: Mevlana, what greater honour for a disciple than to become the recorder of his master's wisdom?

Mevlana Rumi's Masnawi will be heard from Arabia to Cheen. Wherever there is love of learning, there the Masnavi will live and carry with it the name of my master, Jalaluddin Rumi.

RUMI: And you, Chalpi. Where the Masnawi is read, people will remember that Hisamuddin Chalpi was the scribe who wrote it down.

چون ضیاء الحق حسام الدین عنان — بازگردانید ز اوج آسمان
چون ز دریا سوی ساحل بازگشت — چنگ شعر مثنوی با ساز گشت

Chun zia ul huq Hisamuddin inan,

Baz gardaneed zuje asman.

Chun ze darya suye sahil baz gasht,

Chang e shere Masnavi ba saz gasht.

They get back to work.

RUMI: There is a passion in me
That doesn't long for anything
From another human being
Let wind blow through us
Let Shams cover
Our shadows
Like snow.

Rumi begins reciting the Masnavi.

Chalpi writes it down.

Female Kathak dancer dances to the following song:

بانسری کی دھن میں ہے ہر جدائی کی پکار

قصہ غم دل کا ہے ہوگا یہی بار بار

بانسری جو بانس تھی ڈھونڈتی ہے سبزہ زار

اپنوں سے بچھڑ گئی رو رہی ہے زار زار

کب ملوں گی ان سے جائے کر رہی ہے انتظار

تا بگویم شرح درد اشتیاق

چین اس کو نہیں کیوں ہے بے قرار

بانسری کی دھن میں ہے ہر جدائی کی پکار

B'ansuri ki dhun mein hai, har judai ki pukar

Qissa ghum-I-dil ka hai, hoga yehi bar bar

B'ansuri jo ba'ns thi, dhundati hai sabza zar

Apnon se bicharh gayi, ro rehi hai zar zar

Kab milungee un se jaiye, kar rehi hai intizar

Ta bagoyam sharah dard-I-ishtiaq

Chain mujh ko nahin, kion mein aisi beqrar

B'ansuri ki dhun mein hai, har judai ki pukar

Qissa ghum-I-dil ka hai, ho ga yehi bar bar

Two female dancers will dance to ...

ای عاشقان ای عاشقان آنکس که بیند روی او
شوریده گردد عقل او آشفته گردد خوی او
این عشق شد مهمان من زخمی بزد بر جان من
صد رحمت و صد آفرین بر دست و بر بازوی او
من دست و پا انداختم در جست و جو پرداختم
ای مرده جست و جوی من در پیش جست و جوی او

Ai aashiqan ai aashiqan ankaske binad ruye uo

Shoride gardad aqle uo ashufta gardad khue uo

In ishq shud mehman-e-man zakhme bazad bar jan-I-man

Sad rahmat-o-sad afrin bar dasi-o-bar bazuye uo

Man dasi o pa andakhtam dar justju pardakhtam

Ai murda justo juye man dar bish justo juye uo

مکانم لامکان باشد نشانم بی نشان باشد
نه تن باشد نه جان باشد که من از جان جانانم
دوئی از خود بدر کردم یکی دیدم دو عالم را
یکی جویم یکی دانم یکی بینم یکی خوانم

Makanam la makan b'ashad nasheman bi nish'an bashad

Na tun bashad na j'an bashad ke mun az j'an j'an'anum

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